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Assassination Books Called 'Pure Garbage'

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AP Wirephoto

MALCOLM M. KILDUFF
Holds copy of Warren Commission report

By MURIEL DOBBIN

(Washington Bureau of The Sun)

Washington, Nov. 21—Malcolm Kilduff, former aide to President John F. Kennedy, today denounced as "pure garbage" the books which have been written since the assassination speculating on the findings of the Warren Commission.

Kilduff, who was in the fourth car of the presidential motorcade in Dallas November 22, 1963, told a Westinghouse television correspondent, Sid Davis, that the authors of the flood of books are "attempting to capitalize on the assassination of the President for their own personal gain."

"Just Don't Believe It"

Noting that none of these writers were either in Dallas or in the confidence of the White House personnel, Kilduff asserted that their books are based on "pure theory."

"I have absolutely no doubt," he said, "that Lee Harvey Oswald committed the act on his own, and that there was no conspiracy

involved, as has been insinuated in many books. I just don't believe it."

The former assistant press secretary said the Warren Commission "did as thorough a job as possible."

Questioned Bullet

Kilduff said his only point of disagreement with the Warren Commission was regarding their finding that the bullet which passed through President Kennedy's neck then entered Gov. John Connally's shoulder, ribs, wrist and thigh.

The report showed a perfect bullet, he pointed out, and he said he had been assured by ballistic experts that it would be impossible for a bullet to travel through that much mass and emerge in such perfect condition.

Kilduff, who maintains that there were three shots fired, said both he and Governor Connally feel that it was the second shot

which struck the Governor. He added that he had it on "highest authority"—later identifying this source as "a former member of Connally's staff—that fragments of that second bullet are still in the Governor's leg.

Criticized Books

The former White House aide was sharply critical of what he termed the "violation of privileged information" which he asserted has been perpetrated by both Arthur Schlesinger in his best-seller "The Thousand Days" and by William Manchester in his about-to-be published "Death of a President."

Kilduff claimed that he is in possession of "what you might refer to as sensational information" and said he had been offered "a great deal of money" to write an account of the flight back from Dallas to Washington on the presidential jet, Air Force One, on the day of the assassination.

"Should Remain Privileged"

"I feel that when you have the privilege of serving a President of the United States—whether he is a Republican or a Democrat, a Kennedy or a Johnson—the privileged information should remain privileged," he said.

According to Kilduff, Manchester, whose forthcoming book has been described as the Kennedy-authorized account of the happenings in Dallas, has violated his agreement with Mrs. John F. Kennedy regarding the publication date.

Kilduff said that in the original agreement between Robert F. Kennedy and Manchester, it was stated that the complete text would be approved by both Mrs. Kennedy and her brother-in-law and that it would not be published before 1968 unless Mrs. Kennedy chose a prior date.

Has Reason To Know

"I have reason to know that Mrs. Kennedy has at no time given either oral or written permission for publication of the book, for any portion of it, before 1968," he said.

The publication of magazine excerpts from the book must be drawn from information obtained as a result of interviews in preparation of the book, added Kilduff—"so it still turns out that he is violating the basic agreement."

Kilduff, who said he "has no present plans to write a book or any articles" emphasized his feeling that some of the Kennedy books, "especially that of Arthur Schlesinger," were based on privileged information.

He did, however, term Ted Sorensen's book "Kennedy," "an academic work" and said that Pierre Salinger's book "With Kennedy" was "a recount of personal experience done in good taste."

flight back from Dallas to Washington three years ago to borrow.

"Some of the old 1960 wounds were reopened, rehearsed, though about—as a direct result of the intense emotional feeling at the time," he said, adding: "There were things that happened in the

plane that could be embarrassing to both the Kennedys and the Johnsons."

Kilduff refused to speculate on whether there was a deliberate effort made to prevent President Johnson from leaving Air Force One at Washington with Mrs. Kennedy and the official party.

"But if it was deliberate, it worked, because there were so many people in the rear of the plane that it was impossible for President Johnson to get off the plane with the casket and pay his respects to Mrs. Kennedy before the ambulance departed," he said.

Kilduff said of President Johnson that on the day of the assassination "he showed the utmost concern for Mrs. Kennedy, all members of the Kennedy family and the whole party that was with us. There was no grossness on his part, as has been implied by others in the recent past."

Mr. Johnson's reactions were "immediate, and well thought-out," said Kilduff, who observed, "I can't feel that he acted anything other than what we would expect the President of the United States to do."